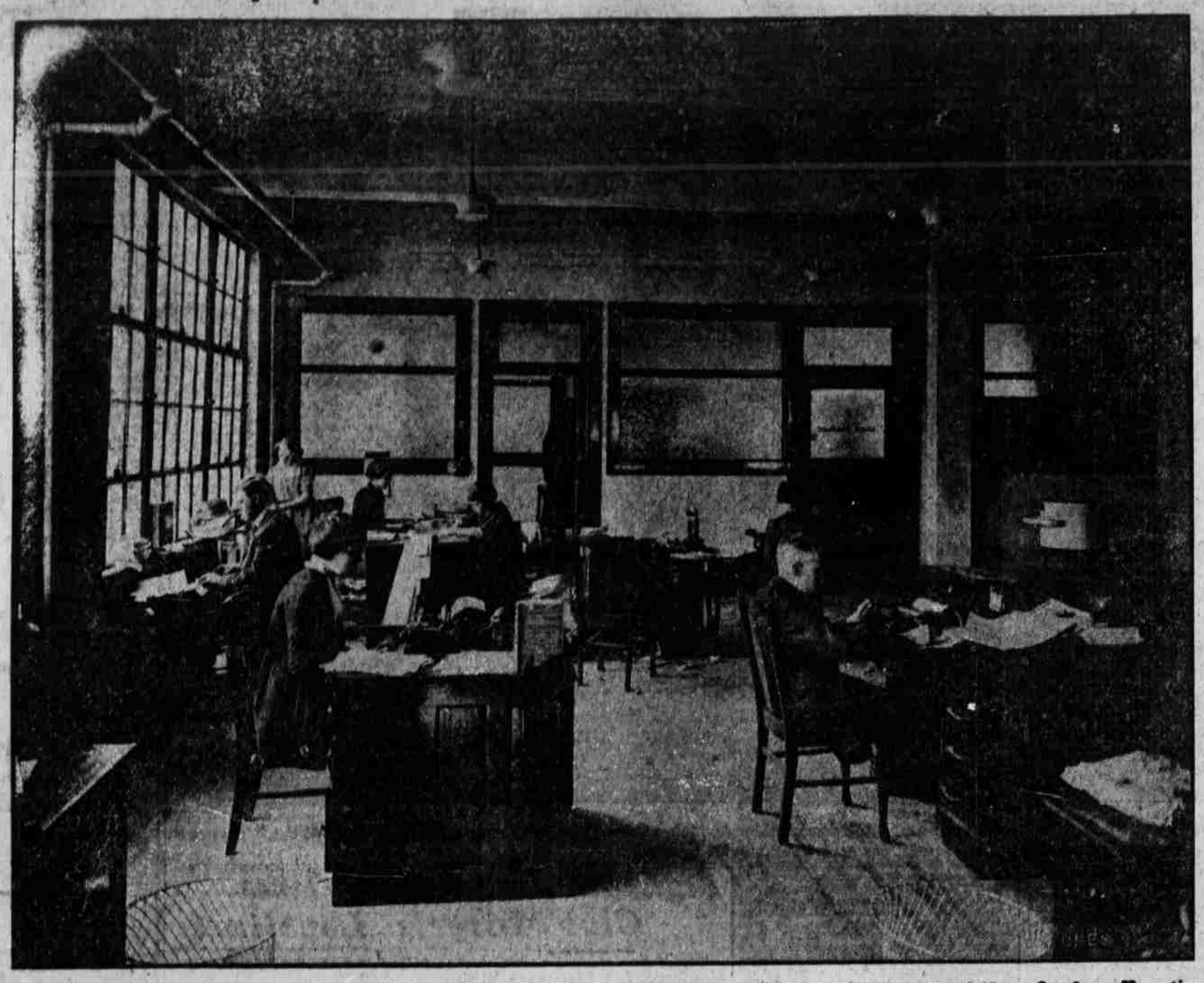
A Glimpse of The News' Editorial Rooms



In this room comes news from all corners of the world, through the leased wires of the Associated Press and International News Service. Here the editors prepare the "telegraph" copy for the printer. The city editor and his assistants, through the reportorial staff, keep in close touch with developments throughout the city, handle the copy that comes in and generally supervise the news part of the paper. This is the room where the news matter that goes in The News is written, edited, headlined and scheduled for the composing room. This scene shows some of The News' reporters interrupted for the moment in their writing by the photographer.

HOW NEWSPAPER PRINTS THE NEWS

A Day in the Life of a Great Newspaper—The Story of a "Story."

DUTIES OF DEPARTMENTS

News, Advertising, Editorial All Glide by Many Processes to Print.

Comparatively few of the many thousand readers of tonight's News realize the complicated mechanical processes required to translate the written word of news article, editorial, or advertisement, into the printed word which they gaze upon. Those of our readers who accept The News cordial invitation to attend its official housewarming Saturday can gain at first-hand an insight into the ins and outs of the printing of a modern newspaper. To those who cannot attend, the following facts may be of interest:

First let us consider the news item, as it pursues its way to the reader, whether it be the humble minor happening or the more imposing great event of the day. News "stories," to use the parlance of the press, are generally classified into three groups, viz.:

Local—Happenings of the city and county.

Telegraph—The "local" of other cities the world over condensed and carried over the leased wires of the Associated Press and the International News Service to this office every day; and

"Special" News—This last is the budget of information furnished by telegraph and mail to The News by its large staff of special correspondents at Washington, Nashville and other points throughout the state.

Each day there is offered a far greater number of words of news than can possibly be handled; in addition to this hundreds of cuts and special features come. The Newspaper Enterprise association, the Associated Press and the International News Service each furnish a picture of persons, things and incidents of interest. These photos have to be winnowed out so that only the most interesting are used; a large file of the others is kept, so that if at some future time the subject of the picture becomes of interest, it can be taken from the file and used with the telegraphic story.

A file of several hundred cuts of local people, buildings, and scenes is also kept.

Many Features Used.

Many feature services are subscribed to by The News, so that it can present to its readers a well-balanced, informative paper. Dorothy Dix writes three times a week for the feminine readers, her stories are followed with intense interest by a wide circle, who perhaps do not know that Dorothy is the highest paid woman writer in America today. Several fashion services come to The News' office; many cuts of women in the public eye, and articles of all things of interest to the fair sex, are bought and used.

For the lover of sports, The News gives daily Grantland Rice's famous "Sportlight," a collection of news and views of one of America's foremost sporting writers which has won for him a nationwide fame. In addition, The News publishes wire reports from its two leased wire services, together with photographs and local information at all times.

For the children, those attractive "Burgess Bedtime Stories" come in handy; hundreds of children demand every night that daddy read them the bedtime story and daddy has to interrupt his perusal of the sport or market page to do so.

"The Doings of the Duffs," "Bringing Up Father" and the other killingly comic cartoons which come out on the back page every day have to be handled by the various editors just as do the news stories that come from the city or over the wires. Each of the features has to be scheduled, set and locked into the page, along with the accompanying news matter and advertising. The entire task of handling the news and features is oe requiring the constant services of five editors or "desk men" as they are commonly known. Each of these has a particular function, and does his part in the work of getting out The News.

To gather local news, each newspaper has a staff of reporters and editors, whose task it is to collect, anticipate and unearth the interesting happenings of the day in the city. The News has a local staff of nine reporters, who are in touch with every angle of the city's life and keep in daily touch with happenings. Let us suppose, for instance, that a murder is committed in the city. As soon as police headquarters receive word of it a News representative is apprised of it. He investigates and ascertains the facts as best he can, interviews witnesses, takes statements and hastens to the News office to write his account. He has informed the city editor, under whose charge he is, that there is a murder. If it is an exceptionally interesting case the city editor assigns another reporter to his aid, who looks up another angle of the case.

The reporter tells his chief briefly the facts of the case, and the latter instructs him in a general way as to the length of the story he is to write. It is then written and handed to the city editor, who reads it over carefully for errors of spelling, style, or fact, writes a headline to go over it and sends it to the composing room.

Writing Headlines.

The city editor in writing headlines follows basic rules which often bewilders the tyro. Each style of head has a maximum number of letters which will go in a certain line of type, and in addition to expressing concisely and pithily the essential facts of the story, it must "count" just so many letters and no more. Each headline in The News is classified. The headline type is known by its height, and the different type faces are named by series. For instance, the headline over this story is 30 point in height; the face is "Latin Condensed." The second part, section or "bank," is 12 point; the third section 12 point capitals, and the final section 10 point. The headline is known as "No. 1"—in writing it is much easier to merely write "No. 1" than to write out the entire instructions as to type size and styles. If the reader will count the top line he will find that but thirteen letters can go into it, and that if these letters be "M" or "W" often not that many.

"This type isn't rubber—you can't squeeze it!" is the advice of the veteran composing room foreman to the newcomer at a newspaper copy desk.

Other men report the markets and the rise and fall of the prices of commodities and securities, and the movement of the great staples on which the south depends.

Others "cover" the real estate offices and exchanges, and tell of the prices of lands and houses, sales of property, the movement of rents, the news of new additions and constructions.

Still others watch the courts—the state, municipal and federals courts—to tell what public officials are doing, what suits are filed, what decisions are rendered, what crime has been done and whether suspected criminals have been arrested. These assignments are "covered" by somebody held responsible for the "run."

What men and women are doing to help their fellow men, and what men and women may be doing to hurt their fellow man—is news. To tell of the first needs helpful effort. To tell of the second ofttimes hurts or kills the harmful effort.

"Story" Becomes "Copy."

After a story is sent to the composing room, it first goes to the copycutter and head compositor, who sets the headline for it on a linotype machine constructed especially for the purpose, then assigns it to a position among the other "copy" (as "stories" are called by printers) waiting to be put into type. A linotype compositor who has finished his previous "take" (the technical expression for what a compositor sets) comes to the "bank" and secures several "takes," which for convenience are marked as "One Ad," "Two Ad," and so on.

The linotype operator then sets the "copy" on his machine. These are truly marvelous inventions, and enable an operator to set up many thousand letters per day. Each letter is known as an "em." Fifty thousand ems per day is considered a good amount for the average compositor. In The News composing room there are eleven linotype machines, manned by skilled and competent union operators. Each of these machines is distinguished by number. The linotype has a keyboard somewhat similar to that of a typewriter. The operator strikes the key and a little brass matrix is released from a magazine at the top of the machine, runs down a channel into a space, is followed by other letters and spaces until a line of matrixes a column wide is formed. The line then moves over and is pressed against a pot containing molten metal, which ejects sufficient metal into the mold against which the line is pressed to make a line of type. The matrixes are cut in reverse of the letters they represent, thus forming the line itself. The line of type then hardens and comes out of the mold with each letter raised and appearing as it does in print. The brass matrices, in the meantime, are carried up automatically to a distributing arrangement, which releases each to its proper channel by means of certain notches which regulate the place of the release.

The operator, after setting his "take," quits his machine, brings his new type with him, and dumps it on the assembler bank. He has put at its top a line bearing the number of his machine, as "Six." He then goes to the copy bank, gets another "take," and resumes his operations. The type he has just set is placed on a galley by a "galley boy," who in former years was the famous "printer's devil." It is put under a proof press and several proofs made of it. One of these goes to the proofreader along with the original "copy" of the article. Other proofs are sent into the editorial rooms for inspection by the various editors.

The proofreader marks whatever corrections necessary, and this proof is taken back to the operator who set it. The line which he placed on the type when finished shewing his machine number shows immediately which machine set it. The operator then sets the correction lines and gives these to the galley boy, who puts them in their proper place in the article. It is then ready to go into the newspaper.

Now the "make-up" man takes the story, and under the direction of the make-up editor of the paper, arranges the story in the proper place in the page. The advertisements scheduled for that page are placed in it. Technically, an iron "form" or "chase" is laid upon a broad steel "make-up table." In it the various columns of corrected type are placed, with the cuts and the advertisements. Each column is "justified"—that is, filled out to the absolute length of 21½ inches, so that when the form is moved there will be no movement of the type locked up in it. It is next tightened up by a key and the page form is pulled off the make-up table onto a movable table or "turtle," on which it is rolled to the stereotyping department.

Stereotyping.

The page form first is placed on a rolling machine, a sheet of papier mache placed over it, and its impression forced into this sheet by heavy rolling pressure. This sheet is known as the "mat" or matrix. As soon as it has been rolled it is put in a gas oven to be roasted and baked. This roasting acts to make permanent the type indentations made in the soft "mat." When it comes from the roaster it is soft no longer, but hard and strong. This mat then is placed in a cylindrical casting box and molten metal is poured into it, sinking into the myriad type indentions on the mat's surface, and thereby forming a cylindrical plate to be clamped upon the press, the plate's surface having each type face, cut or advertisement raised exactly as it was in the original page of type before the mat was made.

The plate comes from the casting box in a couple of minutes, after it has been water cooled, and is placed in a finishing machine, which trims its ends and edges, gives it the proper edge bevel to clamp on the press, and sends it through an additional water cooler. After the plate has come through this machine it is grasped by a stereotyper, who with hand tools chisels off any blemishes that might be left, dries it and places it in a plate elevator, which carries it to the press room, where it is placed upon the News press. From the press The News is taken to the carriers or to the postoffice to be delivered to your front porch.

In Press Room.

When the plates arrive in the press room a pressman takes them over to the new octuple press on which The News is printed and bolts them to the cylinders of the press. It takes two plates to each page to operate only one of the four folders of the press, which will print 28,000 12-page papers an hour on that one end alone.

Ink rollers distribute in kevenly over the face of the plate, which then comes in contact with the white paper web, and transmits to it the ink upon its raised portions—in other words, it prints the web. The paper sheet is now printed on one side; it ascends a few feet to another cylinder, where another plate prints the other side; it continues its journey and joins with other sheets; comes down over a "former," where it is shaped, on down into a folder where keen revolving knives cut the web at the end of the page, fold it in breadth, and it issues forth from the press a completed newspaper such as the reader buys or has delivered at his doorstep by carrier.

The papers are gathered up from the delivery folder and carried a few feet to the mailing room, where the mailing room crew quickly dispose of them, either to train bundles to agents, to the carriers and salesboys, or prepares them for the mails.